A Feast of New Music

T he fashion today is that everything must be radical and new. They are not the same thing "Radical" means a return to roots, and "new" means something that has never happened before. By these definitions, most of the music performed in Santa Fe last month was without either one or the other, but a surprising amount was excellent.

An event that was interesting but neither radical nor new was the performance by Bay area avant-garde composer Lou Harrison and the Mills College Gamelan. Following in the footsteps of Haydn, Pierre De Fallois and Satie, Harrison presented a puppet opera, Richard Whittington, utilizing a text by John Mansfield, the gamelan, and voices. The flat shadow puppets, held up against a silken screen and lighted from behind, were traditional, but showed Harrison cross-cultured with a vengeance. The only things new were the gamelan instruments which have now made their way to U.S. They are aluminum which produces a lighter, brighter tone than the traditional instruments of brass and iron. But cross-cultural synesthesia, no matter how consciously done, takes generations and cultural synthesis, no matter how conscious.

Another fine example of experimenting with traditional instruments, or their ears, or both! is the performance of the ubiquitous Malcolm Goldstein by Joanne Forman. Malcolm Goldstein, handling the gourd rattle, is one of the few really successful uses of "ethnic" materials by an "Anglo" composer.

Energy as pure delight is again applicable to the dazzling work of Malcolm Goldstein who flinches at being called a virtuoso. There is no doubt that he could have had a more conventional career; it is our good fortune that he chose to devote himself to creating music rather than playing the standard repertory.

"Improvisation" is a loaded word, and Goldstein's performance was careful to explain, in a wide-ranging discussion the day after his concert, that freedom does not mean anarchy. Nor does the performer have choice about what sound he will play at any given moment, the parameters of the piece are defined by the composer.

In this, Goldstein is literally radical but not new, in that sense of returning to roots. Baroque music is exactly composed, but with an open space for the creativity of the performer.

Goldstein's performance shone with an intensity and sonority that was totally satisfying, whether in his ensemble compositions, which included taped sounds and sometimes slide projections, or in the mesmerizing Soundings, in which Goldstein thoroughly explored the possibilities of the violin. One would not have been surprised to see flame coming out of the instruments, or his ears, or both! Space limitations always dictate severe choices, and I have reserved little of it for the "starts" of Tune Roads West, the poems of Jackson MacLow, and poet Carolyn Forche. I felt it was more important to discuss New Mexico-based artists.

Weber gladly admits the influence of Debussy on his work, and a certain bittersweet tension. Born in 1936, he was 60 at the time of the performance. Weber's performance shone with an energy as pure delight is again applicable to his work. Driving energy is also evident in the performances of MacLow and Forche. Weber is a lanky, Dame-haired and bearded man in whom time and fortune have created a flame-like presence. Weber gladly admits the influence of Debussy on his work, and a certain bittersweet tension. Born in 1936, he was 60 at the time of the performance. Weber's performance shone with an energy as pure delight is again applicable to his work. Driving energy is also evident in the performances of MacLow and Forche. Weber is a lanky, Dame-haired and bearded man in whom time and fortune have created a flame-like presence.

Forche is a thoughtful and sometimes wry writer. Her poem, "The Commission," is a musical work. But it was more electronically manipulated chant and narrative than music. With as much exuberance in this field, because it was done by a person not principally a composer, it was peculiarly truncated and undeveloped, splendid opportunities to play with sound were allowed to slide by. However, it is not basically sound but image. In The Commission, montage, television and music festival put together by Santa Fe, and it is to be hoped the funding will be forthcoming.

Rising present a day or two before the performance, the Bay area avant-garde composers followed in the footsteps of Jackson MacLow, and poets Carolyn Forche and Joseph Weber and Peter Garland, and Boston composer-violinist Malcolm Goldstein, making his first Southwestern appearance.

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The comparison will doubtless not please him, but Weber's performances are his own compositions on piano and the St. Francis Auditorium organ inevitably reminded me of the work of former Santa Fe-Tam composers. Driving energy is also evident in the performances of MacLow and Forche. Weber is a lanky, Dame-haired and bearded man in whom time and fortune have created a flame-like presence. Weber is a lanky, Dame-haired and bearded man in whom time and fortune have created a flame-like presence.

The Commission is largely concerned with the idea of what music is "organized sound," as Edgard Varése averred, and The Commission is a musical work. But it was more electronically manipulated chant and narrative than music. With as much exuberance in this field, because it was done by a person not principally a composer, it was peculiarly truncated and undeveloped, splendid opportunities to play with sound were allowed to slide by. However, it is not basically sound but image. In The Commission, montage, television and music festival put together by Santa Fe, and it is to be hoped the funding will be forthcoming.

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Tone Roads West was preceded by the world premiere of C.G. Reinhall Gallery of Woody Vasulka's video "opera" The Commission.

The plot is operatic indeed: The 19th century composer Hector Berlioz was ostensibly commissioned to compose a work for the notorious violinist Niccolo Paganini who was very widely believed to be the devil. The commission turned out to be a fraud. More bizarre was the odyssey of Paganini's corpse, with The Commission largely concerned.

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POETRY AND MUSIC:

Four days and nights of new music performance and poetry. Presenting two nationally acclaimed poets, and also draws on some of New Mexico's best poets. All together in Santa Fe, from March 17 through 20th, 1983.

TONE ROADS WEST bring together leaders in the fields of sound/text composition, experimental poetry and new music composition and performance. Bringing this many brilliant minds to one stage will certainly set the creative sparks flying. TONE ROADS WEST offers the audience a rare opportunity to be present at the creation, to experience the dynamics of interaction between some of America's exceptional artists, writers and composers.


Also featuring, a special opening night benefit premiere of the video-opera "The Commission" by Woody Vasulka. About a commission Hector Berlioz received to compose a work for Paganini, and which turned out to be fraudulent. In living color, on large screen, featuring composer Robert Ashby, video artist Ernest Gusella, Cosimo Corsana, Ben Harris and Jere Harris, with sets by sculptor Bradford Smith. Camera work by Steina Vasulka.

Internationally-acclaimed video artist Woody Vasulka was born in Czechoslovakia, and now lives in New York, where they founded Kitchen, one of the best-known alternative performance spaces in the United States. He moved to New York, where they founded Kitchen, one of the best-known alternative performance spaces in the United States. Both are renowned for their pioneering work in extending the aesthetic of video, and for their integration of music and sound into this medium.

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For all the reasons listed above and many more, we highly recommend this unique event that promises to be one of the most important in this field. For more information contact Suzanne Jamison at New Mexico Arts Division, 113 Lincoln Avenue • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 (505) 827-2061.
The series was informed by an energetic and constructive emphasis on human interaction and on art as process rather than product. There were high points of performance in video, music and poetry reading. And there was a pervasive, well-intentioned ideology about the affair that extended through art into politics to create a sense of involvement and commitment on the part of artists and audiences alike.

On the other side, there was the hermeticism that so often accompanies the avant-garde. More than once, labored poetic and musical passages seemed to convey nothing so much as a reinvention of the wheel.

And the shadow of political “a priori-ism” occasionally appeared to have had a stifling effect on the creative impulse, which functions most productively when the outcome is least predetermined.

“The Commission,” a video “opera” by Woody Vasulka that opened the series, had its own pluses and minuses. Based on a historic episode involving the famous 19th century composer Hector Berlioz and violinist Niccolo Paganini, it sometimes followed and sometimes strayed from its storyline.

The “plot” involved a prestigious but fraudulent commission offered to Berlioz for a composition. The offer was ostensibly made by Paganini but in fact by Berlioz’s publisher as a publicity stunt. Such a vehicle might lend itself to the intense and romantic examination of human character that characterizes much traditional opera.

But the overall philosophical effect was more akin to the nihilism of punk art.

That is not to say that emotion was omitted. Rather, it was invariably qualified so that enigma overshadowed affirmation or resolution. Yet there were vignettes of great power, some of them involving Paganini and his son, played respectively by Ernest Gusella and Ben Harris.

Visually, the high points of “The Commission” lay in Da Vinci-esque figure compositions on a grid, and in the electronic pointillism of landscapes settings.

It may be that the apparent emotional hedging of the work had to do with the “experimental” nature of its structure. There seems to lurk behind the professed experimentalism and deliberate rawness of the video format a highly sophisticated visual aggressiveness natured by exposure to commercial television.

If “Tone Roads” video was tough as art, its music was no less so. Peter Garland, composer and music coordinator of the event, noted in the program, “Tone Roads (West or East); They may be a bit rough or rocky, but it is where they take you that counts. And on the most interesting ideas, one may just have to throw away the maps.”

French composer Claude Debussy nevertheless served as mapmaker or guide to one of the series’ most effective musical composers and performers, Joseph Weber, whose untitled work for piano expressed a humble and honest, but not derivative, emulation.

Weber’s “Labyrinth,” also for piano, had the power of understated progression, while a longer piece for organ, “Fantasies, Organa, Dances & Hymns,” seemed to have had a warm-up exercise. Once again, one sensed a holding back, a reluctance to take the leap and offer the resolution.

Of the poetry readings featured by “Tone Roads,” it needs to be said that the power words may have when savored in solitude, or shared in the intimacy of a coffee house, bar or bookshop, is considerably diminished by presentation in an auditorium to persons seated on wooden benches.

One poet introduced a work with the commentary that it would take 10 minutes to read, and it seemed to take 20. Liveliness of pace is essential to public performance, and only poets who read well should do so publicly.

Nor can paucity of vocabulary or image be concealed by an expressive voice. Content and delivery alike must be strong for a successful reading.

All criteria were more than met by Carolyn Forche, whose work was introduced with the apt observation that it shows “no seam between the personal and the political.” In her El Salvador poems — “San Onofre, California” and “To Victoria Champagne” — Ms. Forche demonstrated the unifying and healing power of a view of the human condition that contains equal parts of compassion, protest and humor.

The closing performance of “Tone Roads West” was an intermedia work by Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law. In its voice-on-voice passages, its “score” and its evocative juxtapositions of pedestrian sounds and images, it certainly had its moments — some of them just right and others overly prolonged. By its title, “Hypothetical Moments,” it seemed to sum up the events of the four days that had preceded it.
The Age of Categories or The Era of Isma. It
And nowhere, perhaps, is this categorization
more evident than in the field of music. Just as the genres: classical, pop, rock, roll, punk, country, Western, heavy metal, rhythm-and-blues, punk rock, new wave, easy listening, jazz, reg-
ge, folk, hip hop, and jazz, to name a few, barely scratch the surface.

The concept, the classification of musical genres, came up last weekend in reports that much has been known as New Music. Tonic Roads West, a four-day marathon
of poetry and music sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, brought together some of the biggest names in New Music: Malcolm Goldstein, Charles Kirn, and Carol Law
and some of Santa Fe's most prominent Musicians. Paul Garfield, Joseph Wallace, Jack Loeffler, Jack Bruce and Jack Fishman.

At the same time, it was a different story. Charlie Sexton, played at Club West, with the appearance of young guitarist Charlie Sexton.

For some reason, the term New Music is coming more and more into vogue. Generally, it is used to refer to music that is
new, that is different, that is experimental. But what is New Music? (Continued on Page 24)

POPULATION

The Poetics of Political Commitment

BY STEPHEN LONG

Beginning—at the least—with the Viet-
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of debate. New Musicologists say that the
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This is a controversial issue. Some say that
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played proved to be rich. The four seasons have always been a favorite classical theme, and certainly an easily understood subject. Perhaps this piece needed to venture further into the experiential possibilities of the instruments being played. Still, there was a great deal of musical restraint on the part of the musicians. Nevertheless, it was an interesting involvement of local musicians with a Classical New Music performer of national significance.

On Sunday night, Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law closed the New Music portion of Tone Roads West, and it turned out to be a fitting tribute to the brilliant potential of New Music. Though they fracture almost all of the rules, there remains a refined, classical undertone and motivation to their work.

Their collaborative effort, "Hypothetical Moments," was, without doubt, a tour de force. Both visually and vocally this politicking that has the greatest impact for change. "People who come to the lectures are already interested in Salvador. But those who come for the poetry are often people who know nothing about Salvador."

Almost like a challenge, she added, "You'll see it this evening: The poetry reaches people in a way that talking about my experiences can't."

That night she was introduced by local poet Arthur See, who organized the poetry program of Tone Roads West. Casual and confident, Forche read a few announcements before beginning in a startlingly contrasting mode—after 24 hours of utter seriousness, she revealed a sparkling sense of humor.

Introducing the first poem, "As Children Together," she recalled her well-endowed, French-Canadian adolescent friend, Vicki Champagne (she promises that's her real name), a girl who dated servicemen because "she got blue airmail letters from them and didn't have to do anything with them." (Like most of Forche's work, this poem is concerned with memory.) Forche ends the poem by addressing her French-Canadian girlfriend directly: "If you read this poem, write to me. I have been to Paris since we parted."

Her audience firmly intow, Forche then turned to the Salvadoran poems. Reading or speaking from memory, she intoned her poems in the same slightly theatrical voice of the previous night's lecture. She seemed to be letting each individual person in on a very intimate secret.

What she had said that afternoon was true: Her poetry was even more effective than the lecture. People didn't applaud—it would be like applauding a prayer—or did they even turn to their companions to speak. Instead, they accepted the relationship they had been drawn into between the poet and the listener, as Forche made tangible for them the pain of a war-torn country.

Before bracketing her Salvadoran poem with another upbeat one, she offered a chilling non-Salvadoran poem, "Ourselves or Nothing." Speaking for herself and the audience, she described the plight of the individual who chooses to become involved: "There is a cyclonic fence between ourselves and the slaughter and behind it we hover in a calm protected world like / netted fish, exactly like netted fish. It is either the beginning or the end of the world, and the choice is ourselves / or nothing."

Like Salvador to her, Forche's poetry had invaded our lives.

Commitment

(Continued from Page 21)
Carolyn Forche, 32, a poet and journalist, bypassed El Salvador in January during a trip to Central America. Says Ms. Forche, who now lives in New York: "I'm not a guerrilla. I can see that I'm most effective as a writer, as an artist, as someone who can serve as a witness. Dead, I'm useless."

She arrived in Santa Fe on Friday to take part in Tone Roads West, a festival of contemporary poetry and music that runs through Sunday at St. Francis Auditorium. On Friday she lectured on El Salvador. Today at 3 p.m., she will discuss her translations of Salvadorean poetry. She will read her own poems at 7 p.m.

Much of Ms. Forche’s work, including a memoir in progress, is inspired by events in the tiny, war-torn country. She spent nearly two years there, from 1978 to 1980, developing what she calls “a focused obsession.”

In January, she went to Mexico City to comfort an exiled friend because her two teen-age daughters had been picked up and tortured by government police, Ms. Forche said.

The girls, 15 and 17, were relatively lucky, Ms. Forche said. They survived.

Several of Ms. Forche’s friends, including Archbishop Romero, were less fortunate. The archbishop warned her about her safety a week before he was killed saying mass.

Of Romero, she said, “I knew I was in the presence of a saint.” Ms. Forche, an estranged Roman Catholic, said, "The faith of Salvadorean Catholics restored me. I met and knew those who have since become martyrs.”

Military aid, such as the Reagan administration’s latest request for $110 million, can only prolong the violence, she said.

“I don’t think a military victory is possible,” she said. “The cost in human lives would be unimaginable.”

Since she can’t realistically expect military aid to be cut off completely, she said negotiations should be a condition of any increase.

Her recent lectures focus on corruption in the Salvadorean military.

"The institutionalized corruption of the military should be of concern to Americans, because of the millions of dollars we funnel through it,” she said.

She can rattle off examples to illustrate her point. For instance, she told of a colonel who was arrested by plainclothes policemen in New York for trying to sell them 10,000 machine guns. “I leave it to people to figure out where the machine guns came from,” she said.

Ms. Forche’s articles have appeared in The Nation, Ms., The Progressive and The American Poetry Review.

Her first book of poems, Gathering the Tribes, won the Yale Younger Series of Poets Award in 1976. She has since received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Her poems have appeared in The New Yorker and Atlantic Monthly.

A poet first, she said she became a journalist in El Salvador: “What I was witnessing made me feel the moral obligation to report it. I didn’t think it could be done in poetry.”

She describes her upbringing in Detroit as patriotic, Catholic and working-class. Once she started college, during the Vietnam War, her politics changed to become what she calls, “morally based politics.”
Artfest for the Avant-Garde

Here in Santa Fe we've got festivals for everything: for opera, for chamber music, for theater, for the visual arts, for film (both the Hollywood and independent varieties) and dance. Any art form, it seems, as long as it's "safe," accessible, reassuring, risk-free and given the nod of approval by highbrow culture vultures and academically trained critics, can find favor in Santa Fe.

The reason that the Santa Fe Council for the Arts is now asking, however, is this: Can a four-day festival of avant-garde or politically inspired art—consisting mostly of new music, poetry and performance—find favor in the area that supports an opera and a chamber music festival? Will the same people that flock to hear Stravinsky and Haydn, to see Impressionist paintings and to watch Shakespeare, also flock to hear a festival that is labeled "avant-garde"?

Manuel Goldstein, performance artist, believes so. He has organized, along with John Cage, what he calls "an 800-mile, four-day festival of avant garde and cutting edge events." Mr. Goldstein is one of the foremost composers and performance artists of today, and his work is represented in most major museums of art, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The festival, which will run from Thursday, March 17, to Sunday, March 20, will feature a wide variety of events, including poetry readings, concerts, visual art exhibits, multimedia presentations, and dance performances. The festival will be held at the St. Francis Auditorium, where the idea of the festival was first conceived.

The festival will feature a wide range of performers, including composers and musicians, poets, visual artists, and multimedia artists. The performances will be held in a variety of venues, including the St. Francis Auditorium, the Santa Fe Opera House, the Santa Fe Museum of Art, and the Santa Fe County Museum of Art.

Tickets to the festival will range in price from $4 to $8, depending on the event. Special series tickets, including four-day passes, are available for $30. For tickets or more information about the festival, contact the Santa Fe Council for the Arts at 988-1878.

\[ END \]
Poet-activist criticizes Salvadoran rulers

By ROBERT STOREY
The New Mexican Staff

Opponents of a Reagan administration plan to step up military aid to El Salvador say they may not be able to block the increase but hope Congress will reduce the amount and require negotiations with rebel groups.

"We know there is a difference between what people believe morally and what they can achieve politically," said human-rights activist and award winning poet Carolyn Forche on Friday evening.

"Personally I would like to see all aid to the Salvadoran government stopped overnight, but that is politically impractical. What we'd like to see and what we think is achievable is a requirement on the aid bill that the government be required to negotiate," she said.

Forche said that when she was in El Salvador she witnessed brutality, oppression of the peasants and government corruption.

She lectured to about 120 people gathered in the St. Francis Auditorium in an event sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts and the Santa Fe chapter of Clergy and Laity Concerned.

Her hour-long lecture was part of Central America Week, a nation-wide observance which began Friday.

Forche said the major problem in El Salvador, which is locked in a bitter civil war, is that the corrupt government is run by a small military clique.

Forche said that when she was in El Salvador she witnessed brutality, oppression of the peasants and government corruption.

The current struggle has cost the lives of at least 40,000 civilians caught in the middle between right-wing military groups and guerrillas, she said.

A few years ago, the Salvadoran officer corps numbered only about 5,000, out of a national population of about 5 million.

However, most presidents elected in the past 50 years have been backed by the military.

"You need to understand that it is not the individual persons who are in office or who are in authority who run El Salvador, it is the system which runs the country," Forche said.

A military background and attitude is instilled in El Salvador's ruling class from early childhood, she said. After attending military academies where early ties and loyalties are established, El Salvadoran officers may serve for 20 years in a carefully controlled and developed system before receiving their chance at power.

Forche claimed that for the past 20 years, military leaders have been siphoning off both economic and military aid for their own use. They also have developed an extensive system of corruption dependent on continued U.S. aid, she charged.

"I've talked with many different American advisers in Salvador, and many of them have the attitude about the government that they may be bastards, but at least they are our bastards," she said.
If you're one of millions who have come to regard television as the most trivial of media, Woody Vasulkas may open your eyes to its creative potency in the hands of a true craftsman.

His new video opera, The Commission, received its world premiere Wednesday at the C.G. Rein Gallery in a benefit performance for the Tone Roads West music and poetry festival.

The opera, a true collaborative creation, recounts the macabre story of Paganini in his last years. The epilogue tells of 30 subsequent years before his shabbily embalmed body reaches its final resting place.

The textual music of Paganini and Berlioz was created and performed by Ernest Gusella and Robert Ashley, respectively.

Our physical revulsion toward these gruesome details is mitigated by the humor of Ashley's marvelously irreverent recreation of Berlioz, which he somewhere between Sam Ervin and Bob Dylan. Gusella's Paganini is a tortured, Christ-like figure who communicates through his 10-year-old son, placidly portrayed by Ben Harris.

The Commission is a powerful, exquisitely crafted work. I doubt that many of Wednesday's audience of 125 will soon forget Paganini's bizarre tale, and some of us are hungry to know more.

El Salvador strife
focus of poet's lecture

Poet Carolyn Forche will give a free lecture at 7 p.m. today on the current bloodshed in El Salvador.
Tone Roads: Where words and music meet

Inside: Art by Indian youth in limelight
Festival celebrates poetry, new music

By JON BOWMAN

The New Mexican Staff

Poetry is seldom viewed as a solo art. We go out to concerts, films, plays and dance performances, but usually stay at home, next to a blazing fireplace and a bottle of wine, when we’re in the mood for poetry. Poets themselves are seen as sin to hermit. Some may scribble their lines at the local bistro, but in the popular view, the best poets work by candle-light in the wee hours of the night, closed off to the world.

Tone Roads West, sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, probably won’t change all our ingrained stereotypes about poets and their writings.

It promises, however, to be the most visible, public celebration of poetry yet to be seen in this town.

The four-day festival, which opens Thursday, also will expose Santa Feans to a wide range of new American music, the kind often said to be on the cutting edge.

The seed for Tone Roads West was sown a year ago when five regional poets and Santa Fe composer Peter Garland joined together for a public presentation at St. John’s College. Calling themselves “the Verse Squad,” the poets found they had much in common with Garland. Through the collaboration, their poetry and music gained a new, shared dimension — and a wider audience than either might receive alone.

Tone Roads West also will be a joint venture, but on a much grander scale.

Twelve New Mexico poets and two prominent poets from out-of-state — Carolyn Forche and Jackson Mac Low — will participate in the festival, based at St. Francis Auditorium.

Composers will have strong representation, performing their own works in nighty concerts. In some cases, poets and composers will share the stage, attempting to meld words with music.

Suzanne Jamison, executive director of the Arts Council, said the festival will be the first in Santa Fe — and one of only a handful anywhere — to combine the two art forms.

“It just seemed to me it was time to do something like this — to put the different people together and see how they develop,” she said.

Another goal of the festival, she said, is to allow area poets and composers to rub elbows with more widely known artists from outside New Mexico.

“When you bring people from out of town, that’s a valid thing to do,” she said. “But when you bring people to, there needs to be a way for them to interact with the people in the town, so when they leave, they leave something behind.”

Although Tone Roads West will explore the links between poetry and music, development of the festival program was entrusted to two people, representing each of the featured art forms.

Garland served as music coordinator and Arthur Sze organized the poetry events.

Garland said the festival — with five concerts planned in its four-day span — will offer “the biggest amount of contemporary music I’ve ever seen in a small space of time in New Mexico.”

The emphasis will be on non-commercial and experimental music, including two nights of original works by Garland and Santa Fe composer Joseph Weber. In addition, concerts will be given by composer/violinist Malcolm Goldstein of Vermont, poet Mac Low and San Francisco-based performance artist Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law (see accompanying schedule for times and places).

Garland described Goldstein as “one of the premier violinists of the avant-garde” and a champion of improvisational playing techniques.

Goldstein’s first appearance at the festival will be next Friday, March 18, when he will perform with Mac Low, a close friend.

Goldstein’s major concert will be next Saturday, March 19. At that time, he will direct an ensemble of Santa Fe musicians in the world premiere of his The Seasons: Vermont Winter/ Vermont Spring, which he has been working on for more than a decade. He also will perform his solo piece March 2: Jung, Implications and a piece called Soundings.

“It’s going to be a very ambitious program,” Garland said.

Amirkhanian and Law will close out the festival next Sunday, March 20, with a performance of their work, Hypothetical Moment.

Garland said the performance will involve not only live music, but the use of multiple projectors, taped sounds and other media. “It sort of goes on and on into performance theater,” he said.

She said the poetry programs will be more eclectic, bringing together poets from different ethnic backgrounds with varying styles and concerns.

“I think there’s a lot of strong poetry going on in it’s multi-cultural,” he said. “My overall goal was to draw as the talents in New Mexico. Rather than think of them as individual voices, I wanted to play different writers against each other. I think there’s more music going on that.

The festival will open Thursday with a poetry reading, involving Michael Bershenbruggue, John Brandt, Joy Heray and Law, all working in New Mexico.

Two other readings will feature poets from the state. On Saturday, March 19, Phyliss Alexander, Jimmy Santiago, Simon Ortiz and Luci Tan will join together. The following day, a collective reading will be given by Carol Cullinan, Harold Littlebird, Leo Romero and Nathaniel Turner.

“Most of us know each other,” she said. “I tried to select the best as well
Experimental video opera to be unveiled at benefit

**On the cover**

This week's cover was designed by Mona Kay using a Marcia Muñoz photograph of Bradford Smith's sculpture set for Woody Vasulka's video work: The Commission.

The Commission, a long-awaited video opera by Santa Fean Woody Vasulka, will receive its premiere Wednesday as a benefit for Tone Roads West, the poetry and new music festival. The video work, which will be shown at 7:30 p.m. at C.G. Reinh Gallery, 122 W. San Francisco, tickets are $10.

Vasulka will be joined by poets and composers participating in Tone Roads West at the showing. Afterwards, refreshments will be served.

The Commission is an experimental work, inspired by a historic event involving the French composer Hector Berlioz and Niccolo Paganini — opera violinist of the 19th century.

In the video opera untitled, a fraudulent commission is given to the then-unknown Berlioz. It is supposedly from Paganini, whom the composer adores. In fact, the whole deal is a publicity stunt staged by Berlioz's publisher.

The Commission delves into Paganini's extraordinary life and bizarre character. The work is not strictly a historical narrative, however. At times, it takes a decisive turn toward the abstract.

The cast includes local and national figures.

Composer Robert Ashley portrays Berlioz, while video artist Ernest Gusella appears as Paganini and Ben Harris as his son, Cosimo Corsano plays the Mortician and Andrea Harriss is heard as The Voice.

The Czechoslovakian-born Vasulka and his wife and co-worker, Stel-an, produced the Commission with funding assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts and New Mexico Arts Division.

The two are pioneers in experimental video. In the 1960s, they founded The Kitchen in New York, one of the country's most widely known alternative performing spaces.

**Four-day Tone Roads a first for Santa Fe**

Here is the schedule of events for Tone Roads West, Santa Fe's first music festival. All events will take place at the St. Francis Auditorium, except where noted. Tickets are $4 for poetry readings, $8 for concerts and $2 for lectures, available at the box office. Series passes also may be purchased for $30 by calling the Santa Fe Council of the Arts, 968-1878.

**Wednesday, March 16**

Woody Vasulka's video opera: The Commission will receive its premiere in a benefit for the festival, 7:30 p.m., at C.G. Reinh Gallery, 122 W. San Francisco. Admission is $10.

**Thursday, March 17**

Poetry reading — featuring Mee Mee Bernardzuger, John Brand, Jay Nacito and Arthur Sze, 7 p.m.

New music concert — Works by Santa Fean Joseph Weber, including Labyrinth and an untitled piece for solo piano, and the premiere of Fantasies, Organ, Dances and Hymns for the St. Francis organ.

**Friday, March 18**

Lecture — Ramon Barberido, 7p.m.

Poetry reading — featuring Playboy Ackender, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Simon Ortiz and Luci Tapahonso, 1 p.m.

**Saturday, March 19**

Poetry reading — featuring John Weber, Matthew Mulvihill, Jerry Smith and Brandi, 7:30 p.m., at C.G. Reinh Gallery, 122 W. San Francisco. Admission is $5.

Alegria, 3 p.m., to the Museum of Fine Arts Conference Room.

Floyce Alexander, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Simon Ortiz and Luci Tapahonso, 1 p.m.

**Sunday, March 20**

Discussion — a poetry and new music collaboration, with Malcolm Goldstein and Jackson Mac Low, 2 p.m., in the Museum of Fine Arts Conference Room.

Poetry reading — featuring Carol Cullinan, Harold Littlebird, Leo Romero and Nathaniel Tarn, 6 p.m.

New music performance — Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law will do Hypothetical Moments, a performance piece using tape, music, text, projectors and an ensemble, 8:30 p.m.
Tone Roads West: Poetry and New Music, will take place at St. Francis Auditorium in Santa Fe, March 17-21. Together is individual events are available through the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, 29 Washington Ave. A $5 series ticket is also available.

By K.C. COMPTON
Journal Arts Writer

For four days this month, poets and musical pioneers will converge in Santa Fe for what promises to be a fascinating, if not necessarily sensible, combination of the musical and literary.

"Tone Roads West: Poetry and New Music," sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, will feature poetry reading, new music concerts, lectures by poets and musicians of national and international reputation and the world premiere of a video opera.

The festival will open with the premiere of "The Commission," a video opera by Santa Fe Czech video artist Woody Vasulka. The opera, with sets designed by sculptor Bradford Smith and camera work by Steina Vasulka, is about a commission Hector Berlioz received to compose a work for Paganini, and which later turned out to be fraudulent. (Did Verdi begin thus? Does this make sense? Does it need to? Remember, this is opera.)

The fare being offered is a Duke's mixture of the middle and highbrow, with a heavy eating toward the avant-garde. If Rudyard Kipling is still your favorite poet and Lawrence Welk is your idea of the consummate musician, you may be in for quite an adventure. In fact, even if e. e. cummings and bartok are more your style, you may be in for a challenge.

"Tone when Copland's music first came out, the musicians looked at it and said it was impossible. Now, With thousands of performances behind them, it seems quite acceptable."

"Take for instance violaestro-composer Malcolm Goldstein. He will direct an ensemble of Santa Fe musicians in the world premiere of his "The Seasons: Vermont/Winter-Vermontspring.""

An article in The Village Voice stated that Goldstein had "reinvented violin playing." Whether that is true is open to debate. A quick look at the scores in his music leaves little doubt that he has, at least, added a new wrinkle or two to the art of writing musical scores.

His scores indicate rhythmic patterns, textures and duration through a variety of symbols, such as a map of the rivers in his native Vermont which serves as the musical score to "The Seasons." Music coordinator Peter Gerland is a composer of experimental music himself and he fairly bristles at the suggestion that such work may be intellectual noodling. It is different, he will admit. But no, a few years ago, was Aaron Copland's music.

"One of the reasons it is hard to understand and hard to play is that there is no performance tradition," Gerland said. "When Copland's music first came out, the musicians looked at it and said it was impossible. Now, with thousands of performances behind them, it seems quite acceptable."

Experimentation seems to have less emphasis on the poetry side of the program. Poetry coordinator Arthur Sze, himself the recipient of several awards and fellowships, said he selected 12 New Mexican poets to read their work. The group includes Native American Simon Ortiz, Joy Harey, Lori Tapahonso and Harold Littlebird; Chicano writers Leo Romero and Jimmy Santiago Baca; Chinese-American poets Sue and Mei-Mei Berson; and as culturally unidentified Nathaniel Tarn, Carol Cellucci, John Brandt and Fierce Alexander.

"Because we have a strong writing community here, I tried to select people who represent this multi-cultural group," Sze said. "One of the things I wanted to do, because most of us are well known to local audiences and do a lot of solo readings, was to present a group of different voices. So, instead of having one poet read I am putting four together at one time and we'll play the voices against each other."

Political poet Carolyn Forché is one of two nationally acclaimed poets who will participate in the series. She has received fellowships from the Guggenheim...Continued on C4
Tone Roads’ Lead
To Creative Encounter

continued from C-1

gellowing Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts and has published two award-winning books of poetry, “Gathering the Tribes” and “The Country Between Us.”

Forché has travelled extensively in El Salvador as a journalist and will give a talk about human rights. She will also lecture on the work of Claribel Alegría, a Salvadoran poet, and read her poetry.

“Carolyn Forché is a good strong voice,” Sze said. “I think she will add a lot of dimension to this. The other guest poet, Jackson MacLow, is a composer and performance artist as well as a writer. He was pivotal in this event because we aren’t just doing a poetry festival or a music festival.

“We are going to have music mixed with poetry and performance, and then people who are interested in poetry might have a chance to hear new music and vice versa. And since MacLow has been doing these concert and poetry readings for years, I feel he is sort of a bridge between the two.”

MacLow, an experimental poet, is the only avant-garde writer among the poets. The musicians and composers, however, more than make up for the poets’ traditionalism.

“My idea in selecting the composers and musicians for 'Tone Roads West' was to bring together half local and half out-of-town artists to showcase the strong emerging local talent with recognized artists from other parts of the country. Part of my criteria was to try and select people who crossed the boundaries between literature and music,” Garland said.

“For instance, Charles Amirkhanian uses text material almost exclusively for his musical material. He works with tape recorders and instead of playing notes on instruments, he uses bits of text and words to make music. Very much in the tradition of Gertrude Stein and some of the French Dadaists.”

Amirkhanian and his wife Carol Law, a visual artist, work in a relatively new intermedia field known as performance art. They combine music, slide projectors, lighting, tape recorders and sundry other materials into what the festival organizers say is “a closing night spectacle.”
An Instrument of Infinite Complexity

BY KEN AUSUBEL

Editor's note Santa Fe Residents Woody Vasulka is a nationally known video artist and theorist with his wife and co-writer Susan. In a profile of video art and counter culture, Vasulka is profiled as a pioneer in the field of video art and computer video. Vasulka studied film and fine art at the California Institute of Technology and was part of the early video art movement. His work explores the relationship between art and technology, and he has been influential in the development of video art as a medium. His work is characterized by its use of technology and its exploration of the boundaries between art and everyday life.

Vasulka: My father had a workshop and he was a mechanical engineer. So I grew up in a workshop environment. I was interested in making things and working with my hands from a young age.

Ausubel: And you've always been interested in technology?

Vasulka: Yes, I've always been interested in technology. I've always been fascinated by the way that technology can be used to create new forms of art and expression.

Ausubel: How did you come to create your video art work?

Vasulka: My early work was very much influenced by the European avant-garde of the 20s and 30s. But the ideas I developed in the mid-1960s were much further in the direction of what is now called "video art." My work was ahead of its time, and it was only later that others began to understand and appreciate it.

Ausubel: And what is video art?

Vasulka: Video art is a form of contemporary art that uses video technology as its primary medium. It is characterized by its use of real-time, interactive, and participatory elements. It is a form of art that is closely tied to the medium of video itself, and it is constantly evolving as new technologies become available.

Ausubel: And what is the future of video art?

Vasulka: The future of video art is very exciting. It is a form of art that is rapidly expanding and becoming more integrated into the art world. It is a form of art that is very much tied to the contemporary world, and it is a form of art that is very much beholden to the power of technology.

Ausubel: And what is your current work about?

Vasulka: My current work is very much about the relationship between art and technology. It is a form of art that is very much tied to the contemporary world, and it is a form of art that is very much beholden to the power of technology.
Infinite Complexity

(Continued from Page 19)

Vasulka: I wanted to work with the larger symbolic narrative systems that are integrated into general cultural archetypes, like opera, I asked myself: Is there an application of those primary video codes—which you arrive at by experimentation, investigation or just pure visual joy—that you can possibly apply to this more established genre? This opera was a rather formal exercise for me in which I took certain imaging structures from past work and transposed them into a narrative context.

Still, in the work I'm not really saying anything through thought or conscious, spoken ideas; the meaning of the opera is still communicated in the sense of the medium. I don't like thought-produced meaning; I prefer an image-produced paradox that subverts thought. Perhaps the opera will work, perhaps not. That is another question. It was done as an experiment.

Ausubel: Much of your work in the past has been done in the academic worlds in the East. Now that you've come to Santa Fe, do you see your work changing?

Vasulka: As long as I was involved in discovering or summarizing the phenomenology of electronic imaging, I was able to teach. In many ways I was excited about teaching when I was discovering those codes. But when I moved on to application, innovation ceased and my involvement with my work became more personal. This work could not be communicated with such excitement because it became doubtful and insecure. When you start working, talking or trying to impose on someone else your own creative dilemma, it's a brutal and oppressive act. I was totally absorbed in what I was doing.

In general, I don't like to work. I don't want to get involved in any job. If I can avoid a job, I will. Not being involved in a job is very natural where I come from. Here in America there is a moral code that says a job means dignity. The idea of being lazy here is devastating. Where I come from, most of the fairy tales are about lazy people. A lot of the state of well-being is based on being extraordinarily lazy. To be able to sit without guilt and to stare into the sunset and just be basted by the sun. That's permitted. Here, of course, one gets under the spell of the rush of society. In the early years here, I submitted myself to that wonderful rush. Then I found out that it's not very interesting. So I'm trying to get away, as much as possible, from phone calls—even from getting up from bed.

Ausubel: Would you agree, then, with Paul La Fargue, Karl Marx on-law, that people have the right to be lazy?

Vasulka: The whole idea about activity and morality is very much a Western thought. There's no relief for people accused of being lazy. In my eyes, they are heroes. They submit themselves to the deepest possible torture. Any activity takes you into the area of optimism again. That's why people in the West like to travel or develop all sorts of activities; they hope to prevent death, improve finances, become mentally more healthy. True, it's profitable to be active, but the opposite is much more challenging.

Coming to Santa Fe is a retirement from my duties. I found out that this isn't a community to compete in, but one to contemplate. It's a privilege to be able to contemplate your life, but it's more difficult to contemplate than simply produce.

Woody Vasulka's video opera, "The Commission," will be presented as a benefit for Tone Roads West, a four day festival of poetry and new music, at the C.G. Rein Gallery (122 W. San Francisco) at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 16. Tickets, which are $8, can be reserved by calling 988-1878.

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A five-day festival to open in Santa Fe

By WILLIAM DUNNING  Monitor Correspondent  

The voices of music and the music of voices blend this week in an unusual and ambitious undertaking sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts in the capital, blending music and poetry. 

Tone Roads West is the title of this intense five-day festival that begins Wednesday and continues through Sunday. For series ticket information, you can call 988-1108. Tickets to single events are available at the door only. 

Except for the benefit opening event Wednesday, all performances are in St. Francis Auditorium at the Fine Arts Museum in Santa Fe. 

Tone Roads West opens at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday with a premiere of a new form, a video opera. It will be at the E.G. Rein Gallery, 122 West San Francisco. The work is titled "The Confirmation," and was produced by Woody Vasulka, the Czech-born video producer. Vasulka, who works with his wife Stella, prefers the term "experimenter" to "video artist," noting that he is not always successful. This lends a certain air of expectation to Wednesday's premiere. The plot revolves around an incident in the lives of composer Hector Berlioz and violinist Nicolo Paganini. 

Telephone the gallery to reserve a seat. 

Thursday and Friday's programs begin at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Auditorium. A poetry reading by Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, John Brain and Arthur Sze, poetry coordinator for the events, begin the Thursday events. At 9:30 p.m., composer Joseph Weber will perform his new music, including a premiere. He is supposed to perform on the auditorium's McNear organ. 

Friday's opening event at 7 p.m. is a free talk by poet Carolyn Forche about El Salvador. Forche is a human-rights advocate whose recent book, "The Country Between Us," is based on her time in El Salvador. At 8:15 p.m., poet Jackson Maclow and violinist Malcolm Goldstein start the new music, to be followed by Santa Fe composer and publisher Peter Garland. His music is drawn from Mexican and Native American sources, and sometimes reminds the listener of Carlos Chavez. 

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Telephone the gallery to reserve a seat. 

Thursday and Friday's programs begin at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Auditorium. A poetry reading by Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, John Brian and Arthur Sze, poetry coordinator for the events, begin the Thursday events. At 9:30 p.m., composer Joseph Weber will perform his new music, including a premiere. He is supposed to perform on the auditorium's McNear organ. 

Friday's opening event at 7 p.m. is a free talk by poet Carolyn Forche about El Salvador. Forche is a human-rights advocate whose recent book, "The Country Between Us," is based on her time in El Salvador. At 8:15 p.m., poet Jackson Maclow and violinist Malcolm Goldstein start the new music, to be followed by Santa Fe composer and publisher Peter Garland. His music is drawn from Mexican and Native American sources, and sometimes reminds the listener of Carlos Chavez. 

We may expect to hear Malcolm Goldstein in the "Matachin Dances" which Garland dedicated to him. 

On Saturday, a poetry reading at 1 p.m. features Floyce Alexander, Simon Ortiz, and with a talk about the festival idea taking hold in Santa Fe, and to see the film, music and other events spreading out in the calendar. 

For a preview of some of the music, you may want to get the record, "Garland: Matachin Dances," a record by Ronald Erickson, John Tenney, and Peter Garland, sound rattle, on the Cold Blue label, E6. 

These short dances, about 12 minutes total for the suite of six dances, based on the ancient Native American tradition, are a subjective sort of recreation of the traditional sound. Except for two of them, No. 4, the Dance of Death, written in memory of John Lennon, and No. 5, Cercov, the Night Bird, they have vigorous dancing rhythms that make them come alive in the ear. 

I found myself linking more of Carlos Chavez and Mexican Indians than the New Mexico variety, though there is a feeling of home here, too. The performance might be more spirited.

and perhaps will be repeated someday. Garland's music deserves more exposure to the listening public. This recording was made June 9, 1981 at a San Francisco new music festival. 

Cold Blue Records of Los Angeles produces a clean sound in stereo but packages the records in a soft package that is hard to dust-proof, a plastic cover or an inner jacket is a worthwhile idea. You can get copies of this record from the composer, his Soundings Press, 148 Canyon Road, or probably during the Tone Roads West festival in Santa Fe.

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Garland's work, while incorporating the same modular form, is of a much more somber form. Lacking the technical brilliance of Weber, they possess subtle timbres attained by sensitive instrument. His “Songs of Quetzalcoatl” used piano, harp and flute in a delicate evocation of the mystique of Mexico.

Poet Jackson Mac Low performed, with instrumental accompaniment, a sort of epic poem called “Instruments.” Both voice and instruments combined in alliterative form, not unlike that heard in the primate or aviary house of a zoo. Aggressive words, full of innuendo, such as “cartel,” “narc,” and “coed,” gave this piece a humorous quality not unlike a Marx Brothers film.

His work, some call it “artistic anarchy,” should not be confused with poetic text with musical accompaniment, but more a pure exploration of sound for its own sake. Instruments and voice, losing all common idiom, become one, neither dictating to the other.

Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law collaborated in the most interesting of mixed mediums. Electronic sound, words and slides joined in surreal images, at times frightening, at times funny. Whether one can call this “art” is another matter. That one can call it a superb representation of our age is beyond doubt.

A few Rorschach impressions follow: “Dog of Stravinsky,” a parody of primal dog music; “Andas,” childhood garage haunted houses; “Dutiful Ducks,” a satire on committees; “Hypothetical Moments,” a macabre portrayal of the masses; “Awe,” a parody of astrology;

“History of Collage,” a parody of pedantic art; “Mahogany Ballpark,” social alienation; “Church Car,” the monotony of life in a machine age.

This festival, if at times confusing, was always interesting. My preconceived notions of performance and “art” were at times manifested as prejudice, but this is to be expected from such radical styles and forms.

If this festival achieved nothing else, it was to make one think and ponder our immediate world. A trait conspicuous by its absence in the 20th century.

The writer is music critic for The New Mexican.

<by-richard-barrett>

For The New Mexican

Tone Roads West, a festival dedicated to poetry and music, presented four days and nights of contemporary works ending Sunday. Many adjectives come to mind in trying to describe this amalgam of mediums. But words like avant-garde, surreal, pop and futuristic fail. Musically, everything from minimalist to 12th century organum (polyphony) was represented.

The works of Peter Garland and Joseph Weber, both pianists, represented the mainstream of contemporary music with roots in the classical tradition. The present style of this music is best described by the word “minimal.” A short motive or subject is repeated (sometimes ad nauseam) with slight changes (variations) over an unspecified period of time. This modular form can be very successful if the core subject possesses energy and an intrinsic quality suited to this style. If not, it is no more interesting than shopping mall music.

Weber seemed to have the best grasp of this style. Wedding it to early forms of polyphony and variation (he has a vast knowledge of historical musical style), he created in his work “Labyrinth,” a set of variations with tremendous energy. His 1983 work for solo organ, “Fantasias, Organa, Dances and Hymns,” show a great talent for spontaneous variation, so common among Baroque organists, but today it is all but lost. His keyboard technique, whether piano or organ, is dazzling.
Tone Roads West: Poetry and New Music, will take place at St. Francis Auditorium in Santa Fe, March 17-21. Tickets to individual events are available through the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, 101 Washington Ave. A $50 series ticket is also available.

By K.C. COMPTON
Journal Arts Writer

For four days this month, poets and musical pioneers will converge in Santa Fe for what promises to be a fascinating, if not necessarily sensible, convocation of the musical and literary.

"Tone Roads West: Poetry and New Music," sponsored by the Santa Fe Council for the Arts, will feature poetry reading, new music concerts, lectures by poets and musicians of national and international reputation and the world premiere of a video opera.

The festival will open with the premiere of "The Commission," a video opera by Santa Fe video artist Woody Vasulka. The opera, with sets designed by sculptor Bradford Smith and camera work by Steins Vasulka, is about a commission Hector Berlioz received to compose a work for Paganini, which later turned out to be fraudulent. Whether this is true is open to debate. A quick look at the scores to his music leaves little doubt that he has, at least, added a new wrinkle or two to the art of writing musical scores.

The fare being offered is a Duke's mixture of the middle and highbrow, with a heavy leaning toward the avant-garde. If Rudyard Kipling is still your favorite poet and Lawrence Welk is your idea of the consummate musician, you may be in for quite an adventure. In fact, even if e.e. cummings and Bartok are more your style, you may be in for a challenge.

"When Copland's music first came out, the musicians looked at it and said it was impossible. Now, With thousands of performances behind them, it seems quite acceptable."

Take for instance violinist/composer Malcolm Goldstein. He will direct an ensemble of Santa Fe musicians in the world premiere of his "The Seasons: Vermont/Winter Vermont/Spring."

An article in The Village Voice stated that Goldstein had "reinvented violin playing." Whether that is true is open to debate. A quick look at the scores to his music leaves little doubt that he has, at least, added a new wrinkle or two to the art of writing musical scores.

His scores indicate rhythmic patterns, textures and duration through a variety of symbols, such as a map of the rivers in his native Vermont which serves as the musical score to "The Seasons."

Music coordinator Peter Garland is a composer of experimental music himself and he fairly bristles at the suggestion that such work may be intellectual noodling. It is different, he will admit. But so, a few years ago, was Aaron Copland's music.

"One of the reasons it is hard to understand and hard to play is that there is no performance tradition," Garland said. "When Copland's music first came out, the musicians looked at it and said it was impossible. Now, with thousands of performances behind them, it seems quite acceptable."

Experimentation seems to have less emphasis on the poetry side of the program. Poetry coordinator Arthur Sze, himself the recipient of several awards and fellowships, said he selected 12 New Mexican poets to read their work. The group includes Native Americans Simon Ortiz, Joy Harjo, Luci Tapahonso and Harold Littlebird; Chicagoan writers Leo Romero and Jimmy Santiago Baca; Chinese-American poets Sze and Mei-Mei Bensinbrugge; as well as culturally unidentified Nathaniel Tarz, Carol Celucci, John Brandi and Floyce Alexander.

"Because we have a strong writing community here, I tried to select people who represent this multi-cultural group," Sze said. "One of the things I wanted to do, because most of us are well known to local audiences and do a lot of solo readings, was to present a group of different voices. So, instead of having one poet read, I am putting four together at one time and we'll play the voices against each other."

Political poet Carolyn Forché is one of two nationally acclaimed poets who will participate in the series. She has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation. She is a 1982 MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Award recipient. She is also a National Book Award winner.

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nini's hands, Vasulka creates a striking black and white grid with hands in altering positions that lies somewhere between Muybridge's movement studies and animating a sign language alphabet. When he details the difficulties surrounding Paganini's death, Vasulka creates streaming, ghost-like web forms to suggest Paganini's post mortem entanglements. A spiralling, vortexical camera movement draws the viewer into the action and generates emotional excitement. This work extremely well both in the enactment of the

an electron telescope, or watching a leopard change its spots. The visual splendor is brought to earth by Ashley's mundane remarks. Were Vasulka's Commission proves anything, it is that evil is more exciting than good.

Jack Walworth's installation, Point of Consumption sets out to be a self-reflexive commentary on the structure, content, and process of television production. It is shown within a simulacrum of a lower-middle-class domestic interior—the site of most TV viewing. The set is a one-room apartment with a kitchen containing shelves filled with Tang, Jollytime Popcorn, Skinner's Raisin Bran, and Pepsi. It is further furnished with a bed dressed in orange sheets and a gray crocheted spread, miscellaneous beat-up furniture, and a TV set on a TV cart scattered with back issues of Soap Opera Digest (a reference to Walworth's earlier work on soap operas). This drab interior provides the setting for its jewel, its raison d'être—an intimate view of actors commenting on the tape appearing on the TV set. Walworth emphasizes the conditions of production in voiceovers that announce, for example, "Scene two will be shot at another location...we are too poor to finish [the tape]." Walworth also comments politically on this tape's content—the work of independent producers. The tape asserts: "We independent producers, solitary workers and technicians, rather than Hollywood producers, in organization for free speech... TV workers for free speech in solidarity with workers of the world..." And later, "I just watched the organizations go crawling back to PBS with the independents whining about all the money they don't make..." Walworth's not-so-hidden message is the triumph of non-funded producers in creating their product. Yet, unlike Godard, the tape offers little visceral satisfaction. Instead of giving the viewer a new (or old) political art form, we see a home movie hampered by poverty commenting on making a home movie.

Like the Guggenheim Museum, the architecture of Paris's Centre George Pompidou competes with anything placed within it and usually wins. In this huge industrial barn of a space, the main floor is always jumping with activity. Nam June Paik's mammoth sculpture, Tricolor Video, placed in a sunken pit in the floor, does gladiatorial combat with the space and wins.

In his original proposal, Paik wanted 300 or 400 TV sets arranged in a five-channel, three-color flag. The exact number of television sets in the final version is difficult to ascertain, but the effect is abundance. The monitors were placed in four-part pinwheel clusters raised on cinder blocks, forming modules that gave the individual sets greater presence. Scored to Stephen Beck's 1971 performance of Electronic American Flag this panoply of ricocheting images is simply a large-scale version of Global Groove. In a form of self-ancestor worship, Paik recycles sections of that tape, Guadacanal Requiem, Suite 212, and Olympic Games, as well as work by Kit Fitzgerald and John Sanborn, Shalom Gorewitz, Woody and Steina Vasulka, and others. The subject of the image: